

For immediate release

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Columbus, Partners To Launch Rain Barrel Pilot Project

Expected Benefits Include Conservation, Sewer Capacity, Awareness

Dozens of residents in Clintonville will take part in a pilot rain barrel project, thanks to a partnership between the Columbus Department of Public Utilities (DPU), Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) and Greif, a worldwide packaging company headquartered in Delaware, Ohio. Under terms of legislation recently passed by Columbus City Council, FLOW will administer the program with just under \$9,700 from DPU and 250 rain barrels provided free of charge by Greif.

"This is another important step in making Columbus a more sustainable community," said Mayor Michael B. Coleman. "This pilot project has the potential to promote the reuse of rainwater while reducing inflow and infiltration into our sewer system, both of which would bring long-term benefits to Columbus,"

The project involves 137 homes in an area where rainwater inflow and infiltration during heavy rain events has caused sewer capacity problems. Starting in March, FLOW will distribute a total of 250 rain barrels and will monitor the project throughout the year including post-installation surveys in November. Each rain barrel will also include a soaker hose, allowing participants to easily utilize barrel contents for watering lawns and gardens in dry weather instead of tap water.

"This program was developed under the guidance of the Mayor's Green Memo," said Public Utilities Director Tanya Arsh. "We are grateful for the help and support of our partners at FLOW and Greif."

Based on information and results collected by FLOW, DPU will seek to identify whether this pilot project affects trends in water consumption and/or sewer flows.

"This is a perfect example of how cooperation through partnerships can benefit the community," said Councilmember Eileen Paley, chair of the Public Utilities Committee. "Our investment in this program is maximized through the teamwork displayed by DPU, FLOW and Greif."

This project is part of a continued partnership between DPU and FLOW to help distribute rain barrels; more information about the cost share program available to Columbus residents can be found at www.olentangywatershed.org.